

CLAIMS:

29. (previously presented) A process for preparing a sweetener comprising combining sucrose, an acceptor molecule that is a sugar or a sugar alcohol having free hydroxyl groups at one or more of carbon positions numbers 2, 3 and 6 that can accept a glucose unit from sucrose, and a glucansucrase enzyme so as to prepare a sweetener having at least 20% alpha 1-3 linkages and at least 20% alpha 1-6 linkages, wherein the ratio of sucrose to acceptor molecule is at least 8:1.
30. (previously presented) The process of claim 29, wherein the ratio of sucrose to acceptor molecule is at least 9:1.
31. (cancelled)
32. (previously presented) The process of claim 30, wherein the ratio of sucrose to acceptor molecule is at least 10:1.
33. (previously presented) The process of claim 29, wherein the acceptor molecule is maltose.
34. (previously presented) The process of claim 29, further comprising removing fructose from the sweetener.
35. (previously presented) The process of claim 34, wherein the sweetener contains less than 50% fructose.
36. (previously presented) The process of claim 29, wherein the glucansucrase enzyme is obtained from lactic acid bacteria.

37. (previously presented) The process of claim 29, wherein the glucansucrase enzyme is obtained from *Leuconostoc mesenteroides*.
38. (previously presented) The process of claim 37, wherein the glucansucrase enzyme is obtained from *Leuconostoc mesenteroides* strains NRRL B 1121, 1143, 1149, 1254, 1297, 1298, 1355, 1374, 1375, 1377, 1399, 1402, 1433, 23185, 23186, 23188, 23311, 742, 523 or 21297.
39. (previously presented) The process of claim 38, wherein the strain is *Leuconostoc mesenteroides* NRRL B 21297.
40. (previously presented) A sweetener prepared according to the process of claim 29.
41. (previously presented) A food comprising the sweetener of claim 40.
42. (previously presented) A beverage comprising the sweetener of claim 40.
43. (previously presented) A process for reducing the glycemic index of a food or beverage composition comprising incorporating into the food or beverage composition the sweetener of claim 40.
44. (new) A process for preparing a sweetener comprising combining sucrose, an acceptor molecule that is a sugar or a sugar alcohol having free hydroxyl groups at one or more of carbon positions numbers 2, 3, and 6 that can accept a glucose unit from sucrose, and a glucansucrase enzyme so as to prepare a sweetener having at least 20% alpha 1-3 linkages and at least 20% alpha 1-6 linkages, wherein the ratio of sucrose to acceptor molecule is in the range of from 8:1 to 19:1.

- 45. (new) The process of claim 44, wherein the acceptor molecule is maltose.
- 46. (new) The process of claim 44, wherein the glucansucrase enzyme is obtained from *Leuconostoc mesenteroides* strains NRRL B 1121, 1143, 1149, 1254, 1297, 1298, 1355, 1374, 1375, 1377, 1399, 1402, 1433, 23185, 23186, 23188, 23311, 742, 523 or 21297.
- 47. (new) The process of claim 46, wherein the strain is *Leuconostoc mesenteroides* NRRL B 21297.
- 48. (new) A sweetener prepared according to the process of claim 44.
- 49. (new) A food or beverage comprising the sweetener of claim 48.